

Appl. No. 10/625,052
Amdt. Dated Nov. 4, 2005
Reply to Office Action of Aug. 4, 2005

Remarks

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 102

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Salter et al. (US 6,209,173).

Claims 1-2 and 4-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Takagi (US 6,754,507).

In response to these rejections, applicants have amended independent claims 1, 10 and 13, in order to more correctly express the invention and patentably define the invention over the prior art cited by Examiner. Applicants now assert that the rejected claims are patentable, as follows:

Regarding claim 1, this now recites [a] cover structure for a portable electronic device, comprising: a back cover; and a front cover; wherein, said front cover forms a unitary main joint portion, said back cover forms a shell, said main joint portion has a channel extending therethrough and a recessed portion formed at an outer surface thereof, and when said back and front covers are assembled, a knuckle is formed by means of said shell engaging with said main joint portion at said recessed portion thereof.

In contrast with claim 1, as shown in FIGS. 6A and 6B and understood by applicants, Salter's flip 14 comprises an upper casing 32 and a lower casing 34 (col. 3, lines 7-10). A tube 39 is formed on the foot of the flip 14 only when the upper casing 32 and the lower casing 34 are assembled together. The upper casing 32 and the lower casing 34 each have circumferential projections 80 extending laterally from the end

Appl. No. 10/625,052
Amdt. Dated Nov. 4, 2005
Reply to Office Action of Aug. 4, 2005

of the tube 39 and mating in corresponding recessed slots 82 in the inside edges of the knuckles 28 of the upper casing 18 of a main body 12 (col. 5, lines 8-13). Neither the upper casing 32 nor the lower casing 34 has a unitary main joint portion defining a channel extending therethrough. Also, neither the upper casing 32 nor the lower casing 34 has a main joint portion, which has a recessed portion formed at outer surface thereof. Thus, Salter fails to teach that the front cover forms a unitary main joint portion, and the main joint portion defines a channel extending therethrough and a recessed portion formed at an outer surface thereof, as recited in claim 1 of the present application.

In contrast with claim 1, as shown in FIGS. 6 and 7 and understood by applicants, Takagi discloses a chassis assembly 10 comprising an operation-key part chassis 120 and a liquid-crystal display chassis 130. The operation-key part chassis 120 has a frame unit 121, and the liquid-crystal display chassis 130 has a frame unit 131. The frame unit 121 has a circular-arc overhang portion 126, and the frame unit 131 has a circular-arc overhang portion 136. A knuckle is formed by means of combining the circular-arc portions 126, 136 (col. 10, lines 27-55). However, Takagi fails to teach that either the circular-arc overhang portion 126 or the circular-arc overhang portion 136 is a unitary main joint portion which defines a channel extending therethrough. Also neither of the circular-arc portions 126, 136 defines a channel extending therethrough. Further, neither of the circular-arc portions 126, 136 has a recessed portion formed on outer surface thereof. Thus, Takagi fails to teach that the front cover forms a unitary main joint portion, and that the main joint portion defines a channel extending therethrough and has a recessed portion formed at an outer surface thereof, as recited in claim 1 of the present application.

Appl. No. 10/625,052
Amdt. Dated Nov. 4, 2005
Reply to Office Action of Aug. 4, 2005

In summary, neither Salter nor Takagi discloses a cover structure comprising a front cover which forms a unitary main joint portion, wherein said main joint portion has a channel extending therethrough and a recessed portion formed on an outer surface thereof.

For at least the foregoing reasons, independent claim 1, as amended, is submitted to be patentable under 35 U.S.C. 102 over each of the cited references.

Regarding claim 2, Examiner states that Salter shows the cutout portion having a first edge (see 80) which presses against a second edge (see 80) of the lower casing 34. Also, Examiner states that Takagi shows the recessed portion having a first edge which presses against a second edge of the shell (see joint area between the upper and lower hinge 103 in fig. 19).

As understood by applicants, Salter discloses that the upper casing 32 and the lower casing 34 each have circumferential projections 80 extending laterally from the end of the flip tube and mating in corresponding recessed slots 82 in the inside edges of the knuckles 28 of the upper casing 18 (col. 5, lines 8-13). However, Salter fails to disclose that said main joint portion forms a protruding portion on the outer surface thereof, and the protruding portion has a first edge adjacent the recessed portion, as recited in claim 2 of the present application.

As understood by applicants, Takagi also fails to disclose that said main joint portion forms a protruding portion on the outer surface thereof, and the protruding portion has a first edge adjacent the recessed portion.

In summary, each of Salter et al. and Takagi fails to disclose that

Appl. No. 10/625,052
Amdt. Dated Nov. 4, 2005
Reply to Office Action of Aug. 4, 2005

said main joint portion forms a protruding portion on the outer surface thereof, and the protruding portion has a first edge adjacent the recessed portion, as recited in claim 2 of the present application.

Further and in any event, because claim 2 depends from claim 1, and claim 1 is asserted to be patentable as detailed above, claim 2 should therefore also be patentable.

Accordingly, dependent claims 4-8, which all depend from claim 1 and/or claim 2, are submitted to be patentable under 35 U.S.C. 102 over each of the cited references applied.

Regarding claim 10, this now recites [a] cover structure for a portable electronic device with a hinge mechanism, comprising: a back cover; and a front cover; wherein a knuckle extends from a foot of the cover structure to join said back and front covers together, said knuckle comprises a main joint portion formed on said front cover and a shell formed on said back cover for covering said main joint portion, **said main joint portion comprises a single casing tube defining a channel extending therethrough, said channel is configured to receive said hinge mechanism, said main joint portion forms a recessed portion thereon for receiving said shell,** and a distinct dividing line is formed at the joint of said shell and said main joint portion along said knuckle.

In contrast with claim 10, as shown in FIGS. 6A and 6B and understood by applicants, Salter's flip 14 comprises an upper casing 32 and a lower casing 34 (col. 3, lines 7-10). A tube 39 is formed on the foot of the flip 14 only when the upper casing 32 and the lower casing 34 are assembled together. The upper casing 32 and the lower casing 34 each have circumferential projections 80 extending laterally from the end of the tube 39 and mating in corresponding recessed slots 82 in the inside

Appl. No. 10/625,052
Amdt. Dated Nov. 4, 2005
Reply to Office Action of Aug. 4, 2005

edges of the knuckles 28 of the upper casing 18 (col. 5, lines 8-13).
Neither the upper casing 32 nor the lower casing 34 comprises a single casing tube defining a channel extending therethrough, with said channel being configured to receive a hinge mechanism. Also, neither the upper casing 32 nor the lower casing 34 has a main joint portion which has a recessed portion formed at an outer surface thereof. In summary, Salter fails to disclose that said main joint portion comprises a single casing tube defining a channel extending therethrough, that said channel is configured to receive said hinge mechanism, and that said main joint portion forms a recessed portion thereon for receiving said shell, as recited in claim 10 of the present application.

In contrast with claim 10, as shown in FIGS. 6 and 7 and understood by applicants, Takagi discloses a chassis assembly 10 comprising an operation-key part chassis 120 and a liquid-crystal display chassis 130. The operation-key part chassis 120 has a frame unit 121, and the liquid-crystal display chassis 130 has a frame unit 131. The frame unit 121 has a circular-arc overhang portion 126, and the frame unit 131 has a circular-arc overhang portion 136. A knuckle is formed by means of combining the circular-arc portions 126, 136 (col. 10, lines 27-55).
However, neither of the circular-arc portions 126, 136 is a single casing tube defining a channel extending therethrough. Also, neither of the circular-arc portions 126, 136 has a recessed portion formed on outer surface thereof. Thus, Takagi fails to disclose that said main joint portion comprises a single casing tube defining a channel extending therethrough, that said channel is configured to receive said hinge mechanism, and that said main joint portion forms a recessed portion thereon for receiving said shell, as recited in claim 10 of the present application.

Appl. No. 10/625,052
Amdt. Dated Nov. 4, 2005
Reply to Office Action of Aug. 4, 2005

In summary, neither Salter nor Takagi discloses a cover structure comprising a knuckle which comprises a main joint portion formed on a front cover, wherein said main joint portion comprises a single casing tube defining a channel extending therethrough, said channel is configured to receive said hinge mechanism, and said main joint portion forms a recessed portion thereon for receiving said shell, as recited in claim 10 of the present application.

For at least the foregoing reasons, independent claim 10, as amended, is submitted to be patentable under 35 U.S.C. 102 over each of the cited references.

Accordingly, dependent claims 11-12 are submitted to be patentable over each of the cited references applied.

Regarding claim 13, this now recites a cover structure for use with a hinged device, comprising: opposite first and second halves coupled to each other face to face and commonly defining an interior space, the first half defining a unitary knuckle portion with a columnar channel extending therethrough, said knuckle portion defining an outward arcuate wall, the second half having an inward arcuate mating shell at least partially circumferentially compliantly covering and supportably seated upon said outward arcuate wall, and one of said first and second halves defining an opening and the other of said first and second halves defining a projection engaged within the opening so as to prevent relative axial and circumferential movement between the first and second halves; wherein the knuckle portion defines a groove for communication between the channel and said interior space.

In contrast with claim 13, as shown in FIGS. 6 and 7 and understood by applicants, Takagi discloses a chassis assembly 10 comprising an

Appl. No. 10/625,052
Amdt. Dated Nov. 4, 2005
Reply to Office Action of Aug. 4, 2005

operation-key part chassis 120 and a liquid-crystal display chassis 130. The operation-key part chassis 120 has a frame unit 121, and the liquid-crystal display chassis 130 has a frame unit 131. The frame unit 121 has a circular-arc overhang portion 126, and the frame unit 131 has a circular-arc portion 136. A knuckle is formed by means of combining the circular-arc portions 126, 136 (col. 10, lines 27-55). Obviously, Takagi fails to teach that the frame unit 121 or the frame unit 132 defines a unitary knuckle portion with a columnar channel extending therethrough. Also, Takagi fails to teach that either or both of the circular-arc portions 126, 136 has an inward arcuate mating shell at least partially circumferentially compliantly covering and supportably seated upon an outward arcuate wall of the knuckle portion. Thus, Takagi fails to teach a first half defining a unitary knuckle portion with a columnar channel extending therethrough, and a second half having an inward arcuate mating shell at least partially circumferentially compliantly covering and supportably seated upon an outward arcuate wall of the knuckle portion, as recited in claim 13 of the present application.

For at least the foregoing reasons, independent claim 13 is submitted to be patentable under 35 U.S.C. 102 over the cited reference Takagi.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Salter or Takagi in view of Moles (US 6,424,823).

In response to the rejection, applicants now traverse as follows:

Regarding claim 3 of the present application, this recites a cover structure as per claim 1, wherein said cover structure forms different colors on said front cover and said back cover with a distinct and regular

Appl. No. 10/625,052
Amdt. Dated Nov. 4, 2005
Reply to Office Action of Aug. 4, 2005

boundary including said dividing line.

As asserted above in relation to claim 1, each of Salter and Takagi fails to teach or suggest the cover structure of claim 1 of the present application. Applicant respectfully submits that Moles does not provide any additional teaching to the teachings of Salter or Takagi which might lead one of ordinary skill in the art to provide the invention of claim 1. That is, claim 1 is submitted to be unobvious and patentable over Salter or Takagi in view of Moles.

On this basis, claim 3 should be allowable as being dependent from claim 1.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the subject application is believed to be in a condition for allowance, and an action to such effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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